

Boston College
Department of Economics
Spring Semester, 1999-2000

EC 246 - Economics of Labor Relations

Instructor: Professor F. M. McLaughlin

Office: Carney 130

Office Hours: 9:30 a.m. to 10:50 a.m., and by appointment

Class Meetings: MWF 11:00 a.m.

Place: Carney 106

Overview:

This course is an introduction to the labor relations system in the United States. The emphasis of the course is on public policy, collective bargaining and the settlement of labor-management disputes. The history of both the U.S. labor movement and the legal environment within which it functions will be covered

Text:

Herman E. Edward., Collective Bargaining and Labor Relations [4th ed.], Prentice-Hall Inc., 1998.

Reserve Reading:

Additional reading assignments will be available at the reserve desk in the O'Neill Library.

Attendance:

Regular class attendance should be regarded as a minimum requirement for course participation. The Dean of A&S has reminded faculty that class attendance is required, and may be taken into account in grading. According to the academic regulations published in the A&S Catalogue students are expected to attend class regularly, take tests, and submit papers and other works at the times specified in the course syllabus. Students who are absent on the day of a previously announced test are not entitled, as a matter of right, to make up what was missed, and professors may include as part of the semester's grades, marks for the quality and quantity of students' participation in class.

Course Grades:

Course grades will be based on a midterm examination on February 28 [30 percent], a comprehensive final examination at the regularly scheduled time during the examination period [40 percent], class participation [10 percent], and two short papers [10 percent each]. The paper requirement is described below. Examinations will include both objective and essay questions. Students should plan to be present on scheduled examination dates. Make-up examinations will not be given except at the request of the Dean, and only when the absence is for serious reason. Students are responsible for the assigned readings, and should prepare for class by doing it currently. Students should raise questions about the assigned reading which should be done in advance of class meetings.

Requirement for Papers:

Each student will be assigned two arbitration cases on which he will be expected to write two short reports. In writing the reports students should place themselves in the role of arbitrator and make the arbitrator's decision accordingly. Students should pay attention to what they have learned from reading the text about the arbitrator's role and function. Papers need be no more than three pages long, typed double spaced with number 12 font, and should contain enough discussion to make the line of reasoning supporting the decision clear to the reader. In making the decision students may discuss the case with other members of the class, but students' decisions should be their own, and should be written without the assistance of others. Language taken from the case should be identified by direct quotation, and students should make every effort to avoid presenting the work of someone else as if were their own. Failure to acknowledge the work of others is plagiarism, a form of academic dishonesty that must be thoroughly shunned. One of the two arbitration cases will be assigned by the instructor from those given in the text beginning on p. 373. The other will be distributed in class. The due dates will be given by the instructor a week in advance.

Course Outline:

I. Introduction

II. Industrial Relations Theory

Dunlop, J. T., Industrial Relations Systems Holt-Dryden, 1958, ch. 1.

McLaughlin, F. M., "The Development of Labor Peace in the Port of Boston," Industrial and Labor Relations Review, January, 1967, pp. 221-233

McLaughlin, F. M., "Internal Union Conflict and Pay Bargaining: The Case of the Irish Police," January, 1998.

III. Labor Unions in the U.S: the History

Herman, ch.1, pp. 1-16.

McLaughlin, F. M., "The Replacement of the Knights of Labor by the International Longshoremen's Association in the Port of Boston," Historical Journal of Massachusetts, Vol. XXVI, No. 1, Winter, 1998, pp. 27-45.

McLaughlin, F. M., "Jurisdictional Conflict in American Labor: 1935-1955."

IV. Labor Unions in the Contemporary U.S. Economy.

Herman, ch.2, pp. 17-34.

V. Public Policy on U.S. Unions: the History.

Herman, ch.3, pp. 35-57.

VI. The National Labor Relations Act.

Herman, Text of the NLRA, pp. 478-495

VII. The Labor Management Relations Act

- Herman, Text of the LMRA, pp. 496-507
- VIII. Contract Administration and the Grievance Procedure
- Herman, ch.15, pp. 316-334.
- IX. The Arbitration of Rights.
- C&A Wallcoverings Inc., pp. 376-378.
- Snyder General Corp., pp. 385-387.
- Hughes Markets., pp. 390-394.
- Hercules Engines Inc., pp. 409-413.
- Eureka Company, pp. 420-424.
- X. Arbitration in a non-union Context.
- XI. Interest Disputes and Their Resolution.
- Herman, ch.14, pp. pp. 294-315.
- McLaughlin, F. M., "Wage Criteria Used in Wage Arbitration," 1960.
- McLaughlin, F. M., "The Boston Longshoremen's Strike of 1931." Historical Journal of Massachusetts, Vol. XXVI, No. 2, Summer, 1998, pp. 158-171.
- XII. Effects of the Law on Unions and Management
- Herman, ch.4, pp. 58-74.
- XII. Private Sector Union and Employer Organizational Structure
- Herman, ch.5, pp. 75-104.
- XIII. Management Rights and Union Security.
- Herman, ch.6, pp. 105-128.
- XIV. Bargaining Structure.
- Herman, ch.7, pp. 129-150.
- XV. Bargaining Theory and Bargaining Power.
- Herman, ch.10, pp. 202-226.
- XVI. The Process of Negotiation.
- Herman, ch.9, pp. 170-201.
- Herman, "Bargaining Simulation in the Supermarket Industry," pp. 431-477.
- Review this and read especially pp. 435-448.

XVII. Ethical Conduct in Collective Bargaining.

Herman, ch.13, pp. 129-150.

XIX. Public Sector Collective Bargaining

Herman, ch.16, pp. 335-357.

McLaughlin, F. M., "In the Matter of Fact-Finding in the Dispute Between Teachers Association Union No. 61 and the Sturbridge School Committee," 1974.

XX. The Commission on the Future of Worker Mangement Relations

Herman, ch.17, pp. 358-372.